

PS 3319

.W63



A VISION

OF

Orthodox Heaven.

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Then we make great accessions to heaven ;
Such sinners you know we make white as snow,
Last Friday we scooped thirty-seven."*

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ORTHODOX HEAVEN.

A VISION.

'Twas the dead of the night, the bells had struck one,
Not a star in the dull sky was burning,
As I on my pillow, tired, weary and worn,
But sleepless, was restlessly turning.
The days of my childhood I lived o'er again,
And mem'ry brought each scene before me,
Where passions unchecked youth's bright hopes had
wrecked—
Sad, sad were the thoughts that stole o'er me.

But *Sleep* came at last, on my eyelids he breathed,
And consciousness quick from me fled ;
Then a vision he wrought, with terror 'twas fraught—
I dreamt to the world I was dead.
I thought that my spirit then freed from its clay,
On the wings of the light I had flown,
Up, up to the stars, past Venus and Mars,
Till I came to a region unknown.

Then, in some way or other, I cannot tell how,
The scene quickly changed in a trice ;
I found that instead of being in bed,
I was now at the saints' paradise—
Old Orthodox Heaven, by sinners 'tis called,
Where nought but good Christians are found ;
No Catholics nor Quakers—no Parsees nor Shakers,
You there will find running around.

No Mahomedans, Jews—no poor Pagan souls,

In that holy place can find shelter ;

None but the select, the few, the elect—

All others in hell fire must welter.

I knocked at the gate called Narrow and Straight,

And quickly it wide open flew ;

A sentinel grand, with a harp in his hand,

Then stopped me and said, “ Who are you ? ”

“ I’m a mortal from earth, just off for a day,

And by way of a little diversion,

The earth was so hot, a ticket I got

For a first-class celestial excursion.”

Then my ticket he punched, chalked a cross on my hat,

Said, “ Now, sir, I guess you’re all right.

You can go on your way, and stay here all day,

But must leave, sir, before it is night.”

I thanked him most kindly, and walked straightway in,

And the very first man I met there—

I was filled with surprise, could scarce b’lieve my *eyes*

Was our good friend, Saint William McNair.

He’d a crown on his head, on his shoulders was slung

A harp of twenty-four karat gold ;

He’d a club in his hand, round his waist a big band,

He looked, indeed, reckless and bold—

That’s bold for a saint, for they’re generally meek ;

But Bill was a first-class exception.

He was pious and brave, to no passions a slave,

Of his virtues you have no conception.

I found that all spies, and informers too,

Stood high in the regions of bliss.

Too good for the earth, they have a new birth,

And come quickly from your world to this,

Beautiful heaven, with streets of pure gold,
 And curbstones of onyx most fine ;
 With houses of coral, built for the moral,
 Baptists and those in that line.

Evangelical Christians they all style themselves,
 Pious Methodists there may be seen,
 Presbyterians blue, and Calvinists too,
 On heaven will hold a first lien.

I soon found Saint Billy was Chief of Police—
 An appointment that doubtless seems queer.
 But on earth he won fame, in Old Zion a name,
 For putting down all Sunday beer.
 He approached me at once, and immediately said,
 “I think, sir, I’ve seen you before,
 One Sunday at noon, in a Jersey saloon,
 As I peeped through a crack in the door.”

Then quickly I said, “Sir, ‘tis all a mistake,”
 And I showed him the cross on my hat ;
 “ ‘Twas some child of sin, for I never was in
 Any vile, wicked place such as that.”
 “Beg pardon,” he said, “but I thought that your breath
 Of something or other smelt strong.”
 “It’s cloves, sir,” I said, and bowed down my head ;
 “I hope I’ve committed no wrong.”

“By no means! by no means!” Saint Billy replied ;
 “To eat them is perfectly right,
 For I know not few of good Christians who
 Chew them when out late at night.”
 Then I said, “Oh! great chief, of pious renown,
 Your city I feign would explore ;
 To see all the sights, and all the great lights,
 That dwell on this beautiful shore.”

“ You shall, sir,” he said ; “ and now, to begin,
 IGNORANCE lives in that house number four ;
 She’s the mother, you see, of old BIGOTRY :
Superstition and *Faith* live next door.
 Old Faith has been blind for many a day ;
 Indeed, it has often been said
 The eyeless old dame has ne’er been the same
 Since *Truth* and young *Science* were wed.”

“ That Science I wish he was roasting in hell,
 He daily is killing our cause,
 Asserting our Bible is nought but a libel
 On Nature’s unchangeable laws.”
 “ *Yes* ! yonder, that man with a brand in his hand,
 He Servetus burned, while on earth,
 John Calvin’s his name, his method was flame,
 When he wished to give men a new birth.”

“ But,” said Saint William, “ its nearly high noon,
 And I think the best place we can go
 Is to ORTHODOX HALL, where we can see all
 Sinners tried that come up from below ;
 For all the great men in this heavenly place
 To-day will be present at Court,
 ‘Tis Friday you see, and no doubt ther’ll be,
 At the trials some fine Christian sport.”

“ For on FRIDAY all felons are hung upon earth,
 Then we make great accessions to heaven,
 Such sinners you know, we make white as snow,
 Last Friday we scooped thirty-seven.
 On that day the music is always the best,
 King David himself leads the choir ;
 You ought to hear him, when he’s in good trim,
 Sing his balled called Mrs. Uriah.”

“ I know that his son, old King Sol, will be there,
 Perhaps he will play a bone solo ;
 When the trials are o'er we'll go down to the shore,
 And see Moses and Aaron play polo.”
 To the High Court of Heaven then quickly we sped,
 The scene was impressive and grand,
 Every Saint wore a crown--the Chief Justice a frown,
 And each held a harp in his hand.

Chief Justice Saint McIlvaine opened the Court,
 And cried, in a voice loud and shrill :
 “ A sinner bring in, let the trials begin.”
 The myrmidons answered, “ We will.”
 The first was a man, with a sanctified air,
 Who looked not a bit like a sinner,
 White chokered and bland, with a tract in his hand ;
 “ Your name, sir ? ” “ I'm called Abel Skinner.”

Then Mac took the ledger, and turned to his name,
 “ Abel Skinner, your record looks bad ;
 You'd a post, sir, of trust, and should have been just,
 But you stole all the funds the bank had.
 The widow and orphan you robbed here, I see—
 Of this there is not any doubt ;
 Pray, arise and explain—Was it, sir, for gain ?
 Please tell us how this came about ? ”

Abel hung down his head, and meekly replied :
 “ But much on our church, sir, I spent ;
 Satan tempted my soul—I yielded and stole,
 But now, sir, I truly repent.
 One thousand to missions I gave every year,
 To convert the poor heathen people
 To our holy cause, and if I broke laws,
 I gave much to build our church steeple.”

“A Methodist, sir, I have been all my life,
 Stood high in the Y. M. C. A. ;
 In prayer-meeting led, the Bible oft’ read,
 Had worship at home every day ;
 Besides, sir, the money I took from the bank
 Belonged to the wicked and bad,
 Who hated our church--those I left in the lurch,
 And piously stole what they had.”

Mac smiled, and replied, “All, all is explained ;
 I see you’ve done much for our cause.
 You’re saved by your b’lief, although dubbed a thief ;
 You’re a saint, sir, by Orthodox laws.
 Take a seat on my right, Saint Blanchard enrol
 His name with the saints of high grade—
 A legion quite grand, and known in this land
 As the Orthodox Cashiers’ Brigade.”

“Next, next!” cried the Justice, and quickly appeared
 A man, tall, consumptive and pale.
 “Your name and your age?” cried Mac, in a rage.
 “I’m sixty ; my name is John Hale.”
 Saint Mac then rose up, and said : “Mr. Hale,
 This ledger proclaims you a sinner ;
 I think ’twould be well to send you to hell,
 And there let you wrestle your dinner.

“But what have you to say? Speak out for yourself.”
 John said : “I’ve been good to the poor ;
 The needy I clothed, hypocrisy loathed,
 And loved all that was noble and pure.
 I paid all my debts, was honest and true ;
 Tried ever to do what was right ;
 Never lied in my life ; loved children and wife ;
 Was temperate, and never got tight.”

Then Saint McIlvaine said : " This ledger here shows
 Our miracles long you have doubted ;
 Every Sabbath you broke, said that asses ne'r spoke ;
 Raising men from the dead you have scouted.
 Don't you b'lieve that the sun and the moon once stood still ?
 That the story of Jonah is true—
 That in a big whale he once took a sail ?"
 " Your honor, I don't believe I do."

" Not b'lieve it !—not b'lieve it !—to hell with him quick !
 He never shall with the saints dwell.
 Put him out, fire him out—' Amen,' they all shout—
 We'll roast him and boil him in hell."
 The next was a German. Mac rose with a scowl :
 " Your business—what have you to say ?"
 " On earth I sell beer, mine heart it ish clear,
 For mine brewer I alvays did pay.

I gave to dee sick, und to hoshpitals, too.
 Took care of mine kinder und frau ;
 I never make fight, I do vat ish right—
 Dat ish all vat I say, anyhow."
 Saint Mac then spoke out : " This Dutch sinner here
 Of wretches is one of the worst.
 He sold and drank beer, of church had no fear,
 He's accurs'd ! he's accurs'd ! he's accurs'd !"

" I shpeak yust von vord, Saint Mac, ven you blease.
 Dairs Foster, dat Ford, und dat Yates,
 Ven dem ish dee kind of saints here I find,
 I runs quick to hell—vairs the gates ?
 I sooner in hell vould burn up all dee vile,
 Dan live mit sooch fellows as dose.
 Fanatics dey call, mit no sense at all ;
 Yah, I go dair mit out any clothes."

Then Saint Mac cried aloud : " Police, here ! Police !
 Throw this wretch in the cauldrons of hell !"
 In a moment 'twas done, and Germany's son
 Shouted out : " Velcome, hell ! velcome, hell !"
 The next was a man whose neck had been broke,
 His misfortune was caused by a fall ;
 He looked very sad, as if he felt bad,
 He'd been dancing on nothing at all.

" Your name said Saint Mac and how came you here ?"
 " On earth I was called Brother Cox ;
 I went out to rob, but it proved a bad job,
 And I found myself in a bad box ;
 A woman I killed, all her jewels I stole,
 And then the law makers killed me,
 But before I was sent I'd time to repent,
 I'm a Christian you plainly can see."

" I b'lieve in the Bible, I've been twice baptized,
 I've had both a sprinkle and dip,
 I prayed every night, I knew that was right,
 Oh ! I'm, sir, no sin-loving rip."
 " All right, Brother Cox, your records quite clear,
 You're a Saint now, as I am myself ;
 Saint Ford hand him down a number one crown,
 You'll find one upon the top shelf."

" On his shoulders put wings, now give him a harp,
 Erase that red mark from his neck,
 There now he's a saint, of sin there's no taint,
 For his carpet-bag give him a check ;
 Saint Comstock will show our new Saint to a seat,
 Saint Vosburgh his harp please attune,
 Faith grand and sublime atones for all crime,
 To felons our creed's a great boon."

“ Now tune up your harps, your voices upraise,
 Saint David will please lead the choir,
 Let heaven loud ring, as *our* praises sing,
 Saint Chastine, you play the *bass lyre*.”
 The hymn that they sung was impressive and grand,
 The chorus I ne'er shall forget,
 T'was sweet and sublime in short metre rhyme ;
 The end of each verse was *you bet*.

Then I said to my saint, Billy McNair,
 “ If these trials are o'er for the day,
 I'd like to see hell, and those that there dwell,
 That's if there is any safe way.
 “ Oh, certainly ; certainly ! Just follow me ;
 We can see it from yonder back door.
 This telescope here will make hell appear
 As if it were on the ground floor.”

I looked through the glass—oh, horrible sight !
 My senses I scarcely could believe—
 Schalk playing euchre with Frederick the Great,
 With four Jacks and an ace up his sleeve.
 Old Huxley was driving a one-horse coupe,
 With pantaloons stuck in his boots ;
 While Tyndall and Zulick, and Schiller and Wirz,
 Were smoking vile brimstone cheroots.

Bill Shakespeare and Waldman were running a show ;
 Lord Byron was peddling clams ;
 While Charley Courtois, that broth of a boy,
 Was making boned turkey of hams.
 Old Humboldt and Otto were playing croquet ;
 Bill Stansby was hunting a fan ;
 Gus Abeel and Voltaire were playing Soltaire ;
 Cross and Geddicke both danced the Can-can.

Ben Butler was running a policy shop,
 Prince Bismarck a temperance saloon ;
 Ben Franklin and Douai were running a line
 Of telegraph up to the moon.
 Napoleon and Webster were rowing a race,
 Tom Jefferson was the umpire ;
 Napoleon claimed foul, but Dan, with a growl,
 Called him a French frog-eating liar.

Napoleon got mad, he raved and he tore,
 And swore Daniel's nose he would skin,
 But peace came about, when Cæsar cried out,
 "Let's all take a cocktail of gin."
 They shook hands at once, and said the regard
 Each one of them had for the other
 Was deep and sincere, just as men and maids here,
 After fighting, oft hug one another.

At this moment a hand on my shoulder I felt,
 Five hundred Saints gathered about,
 And old Parson Graves, of the Orthodox Braves,
 Cried aloud, chuck him out, throw him out,
 He's an unbelieving wretch that bigotry hates,
 He's one of the infidel cattle,
 I know him full well, quick, throw him in hell.
 'Gainst our creed he shall never more battle.
 They seized me at once, and gave me a pitch,
 I landed on my bedroom floor,
 I struck on my head, as I fell out of bed,
 My nightmare and vision were o'er.

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